NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program (CAP)

Submitting an NSDI CAP Proposal

Step-by-step guidance on how to submit a proposal to the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) Cooperative Agreements Program

fgdc

vers. 20071015

0

Learning Objectives

After completing this module the student can:

- ▶ Access the NSDI CAP program announcement
- ▶ Plan and execute proposal preparation in accord with the CAP schedule
- ▶ Complete each CAP proposal form and address each requirement
- ▶ Identify contacts and resources that can aid in developing the CAP proposals
- ▶ Download the application package from Grants.gov
- ▶ Submit a complete CAP proposal via Grants.gov
- ▶ Outline the steps of the CAP review process

Access CAP Grant Information

Where to find the CAP announcement

- **NSDI CAP Web site**
  http://www.fgdc.gov/grants
  includes schedule information and brief descriptions of the categories
- **Grants.gov Web site**
  http://www.grants.gov/
  centralized site for federal government grant programs
- **Grants.gov Animated Overview**
  http://www.grants.gov/flash/GDGOverview.html
  overview of Grants.gov functions and use

Schedule

Proposal Submission

- ▶ Submittal period varies between sixty and ninety days after the Announcement opens
  - Program Announcement posted as early in federal fiscal year (Oct. 1) as budget and programming allow
  - 2008 program opens in October 15, 2007 and closes on December 18, 2007
- ▶ **All** proposals must be submitted electronically via Grants.gov therefore you must register with Grants.gov *before* you can submit your proposal
  - the registration process requires 1-3 weeks so register early… register now!
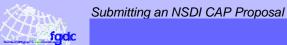 - once registered, you can apply to all federal grant programs

3

3

Schedule

Proposal Review and Award

- ► Proposal review period requires four to six weeks after the closing date

- ► CAP Awards are announced as soon as the review period is completed
  - 2008 CAP Awards should be announced by February 2008

Project Implementation

- ▶ Project Start Date
  - based on the date listed by recipient in the proposal
  - must start before end of fiscal year (September 30)
- ▶ Category-specific Orientation Workshops
  (*if indicated in the Category Requirements*)
  - generally scheduled within 60 days of award
  - Category Lead coordinates workshop site and date with recipients
  - Category Recipients meet, collaborate and review schedule and reporting requirements
  - CAP funding is used to cover travel costs and is considered part of the award

Proposal Components

Summary of Required Components

- Application for Federal Assistance - SF 424
- Budget Information - SF 424A
- Assurances – SF 424B
- Project Narrative
- Budget Breakdown
- Other category-specific requirements as specified in the CAP announcement

Format for submittal

- Adobe Acrobat (.pdf)

Proposal Components

Summary of Optional Components

- Letters of Support
- Related Reports
- Other supporting documents
- Project personnel resumes or Curriculum Vitae

Format for submittal

- Adobe Acrobat (.pdf)
- Tagged Image File Format (.tif) or other scanned document format

Required Proposal Components

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

The core government-wide standard data sets and forms for grant application packages

▶ SF424 Core Form

A general information page that documents the:

- contact information for submitting organization
- grant program to which the proposal is submitted
- project title
- project duration
- geographic impact of the project
- amount of funding requested

Required Proposal Components

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

► SF424 Core Form (cont'd)

- Once registered at Grants.gov much of the required information automatically loads into the form
- Item 6f: *Name and Contact Information*

  provide information for the NSDI CAP project lead, all project correspondence will go to this person

- Item 15: *Descriptive Title of Applicants Project*

  be sure to preface your project title with the NSDI CAP Category

- Item 17: *Proposed Project*

  the start and end date can be modified after the award is granted, sometimes this is to accommodate the CAP orientation workshop but grant period should not exceed one year

Required Proposal Components

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

- ▶ SF424-A: Budget Information Non-Construction Programs
  A summary of the project budget by:
  - tasks
  - expense categories (salary, travel, supplies, etc.)

- ▶ SF424-B: Assurances Non-Construction Programs
  A listing of varied assurances that the applicant must make with regard to eligibility for funding and compliance with federal laws

Required Proposal Components

Project Narrative

A brief (max. 5 page, about 3000 words) project description

- ▶ Primary document evaluated by the review panel
- ▶ Exact content specified for each CAP Category but generally includes:
  - project scope
  - expected benefits
  - technical approach
  - deliverables
  - project and/or NSDI-related experience
  - commitment to effort
  - organizational capacity and resources

fgdc

Required Proposal Components

Budget Breakdown

An explanation of the specific individuals, events and/or materials that are supported by the following SF 4242-A Budget Items:

- ▶ Salaries and wages
- ▶ Field/travel expenses
- ▶ Other direct costs such as:
  - ▪ supplies
  - ▪ equipment
  - ▪ contracted services
- ▶ Indirect / overhead charges

See the CAP Announcement for budget breakdown details

Required Proposal Components

Budget Restrictions

Individual CAP Categories may exclude or limit the use of funds for expenditures such as:

- Data collection
- Data purchase
- Hardware purchase
- Software purchase
- Contractor support

Read the CAP Announcement carefully to determine funding restrictions that may apply to your project

Required Proposal Components

In-kind Resource Match

- ► Requirement varies for each category and ranges between 50% to 100%
- ► Funding commonly used as In-kind Match:
  - salaries
  - funds from non-federal contributors
  - hardware and/or software dedicated to the project
  - indirect costs
- ► Funding that cannot be used as In-kind Match;
  - funding from other Federal agencies
  - value of geospatial data holdings (some exceptions)

Read the CAP Announcement carefully to determine the In-kind Match requirements specific your project

fgdc

Required Proposal Components

Category-specific Requirements

Each CAP Category may require specific proposal components. For example, in 2008:

► *Category 2: Best Practices in Geospatial Service Orientent Architecture* required partnership between an industry provider of SOA consulting and a federal governmental organization

► *Category 6: FGDC-Endorsed Standards Implementation Assistance and Outreach* required partnerships with the subject matter experts of the maintenance authority for the FGDC-endorsed standard

national spatial data infrastructure training program

15

Optional Proposal Components

Optional Proposal Components

- ▶ Letters of Support
  - from collaborators and/or project stakeholders
  - may be required for Categories focused on partnership and collaboration
  - often includes Letters of Support from the regional USGS Geospatial Liaison
- ▶ Related Reports
  - related project summaries that exhibit capabilities and capacity
  - annual reports that demonstrate engagement in the NSDI

Optional Proposal Components

fgdc

Optional Proposal Components

▶ Other supporting documents
  ▪ organizational documents that affirm leadership role
  ▪ items that support statements made in the Project Narrative

▶ Project personnel resumes or Curriculum Vitae
  ▪ Principal Investigator
  ▪ key technical personnel
  ▪ consultants (if allowed)

17

17

Summary of What to Submit

Paperwork to submit

- SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance
- SF-424A Budget Information
- SF-424B Assurances–Non-Construction Programs
- Project narrative
- Budget Breakdown
- Other required documents
- Optional documents

Read the CAP Announcement carefully to determine the application requirements specific your project

Help with Proposals

Topic Development and Collaborative Resources

- ▶ Contact your regional USGS NSDI Liaisons at:
  http://nmcatalog.usgs.gov/crreps/faces/crreps.jspx
- ▶ Review reports from past CAP recipients available from:
  http://www.fgdc.gov/grants
- ▶ Contact the CAP Coordinator or CAP category lead identified in the CAP Announcement
- ▶ Review a successful, past proposal by:
  - sending a formal request for the proposal information via the FOIA office (http://www.usgs.gov/foia/index.html), or
  - sending an informal request to the CAP Coordinator to forward to the submitting organization for permission to share the document

19

Submitting Your Proposal via Grants.gov

Grants.gov

A centralized location to explore, access and apply to U.S. Federal government grant opportunities

- **ALL** CAP proposal must be submitted via Grants.gov
- **NO** hardcopy proposals are accepted
- Grants.gov application process requires prior registration with external federal and business registries – so plan ahead and register now
- More information is available at: http://www.grants.gov/

GRANTS.GOV℠

Submitting Your Proposal via Grants.gov

Step One: Access your DUNS Number

A Data Universal Number System (DUNS) Number is required to submit a CAP Proposal

- A DUNS Number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 100 million businesses worldwide

- If your organization does not have a DUNS Number request one from: http://www.dnb.com/

Submitting Your Proposal via Grants.gov

Step Two: Register with the Federal Central Contract Registry (CCR)

CCR is the primary registrant database for U.S. Federal agency acquisition missions, including Federal agency contract and assistance awards

► Your organization must be registered and an E-Business Point of Contact (POC) designated

► You must be identified as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) by the E-Business POC

► More information is available from: http://www.ccr.gov

Submitting Your Proposal via Grants.gov

Step Three: Download the NSDI CAP Application Package from Grants.gov

Downloading a grant application package allows you to complete it offline and route it through your organization for review before submitting

- ▶ Download the application package from: https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html
- ▶ Provide the CFDA Number, '**15.809**' to access the NSDI CAP application package

fgdc

Submitting Your Proposal via Grants.gov

Step 4: Complete the NSDI CAP Application
  Package

   Complete the application on your own computer

   ► Instructions on how to open and use the forms in the
     package are on the application package cover sheet

   ► Edits to your application are saved locally

   ► The package cannot be submitted until all required fields
     have been completed

   ► A narrated tutorial on how to complete a grant application
     package is provided at:
     http://www.grants.gov/images/Application_Package.swf

national spatial data infrastructure training program   24

Submitting Your Proposal via Grants.gov

Step 5: Submit the Completed NSDI CAP
Application Package

- ▶ Click the submit button located at the top of the application package cover page. It will not be live until you have:
  - completed all required forms
  - attached all required documents
  - saved your application package
- ▶ Log in to Grants.gov using your username and password.
- ▶ Click the "Sign and Submit" button on the summary page
- ▶ A Grants.gov tracking number will be provided at the bottom of this screen, as well as the submission's official date and time - *record the tracking number*

Proposal Selection Process

1. CAP Coordinator and Category Leads review proposals to ensure compliance to all requirements
2. Category Leads recruit individuals with Category-specific expertise to serve on Review Panels
3. Compliant proposals are placed on internal Web site and access is provided to Review Panel members
4. Each Review Panel member reviews the assigned proposals individually using a provided score sheet
   - scoring is based on the exact criteria and point allotment specified in the CAP Announcement
   - completed score sheets are preserved so that the selection process can be revisited at any time

26

Proposal Selection Process

- ► The panels meet either in person or via teleconference to discuss the proposals and their scores
- ► The Category Lead compiles all the reviews and scores and ranks the proposals
- ► The information is passed to the FGDC Secretariat Director for final selection

Proposal Selection Process

Review Panels

- Category leads recruit volunteers from:
  - previous CAP recipient organizations
  - USGS Geospatial Liaisons
  - FGDC Coordination Group
  - Federal, State, and Local government
  - University, non-profit and private sector organizations
- Recruitment attempts to diversify the type of organizations represented by review panel members
- Panels are composed of 5 to 16 individuals depending on the number of proposals to review and the CAP funding Category

fgdc

Proposal Selection Process

Hints for Successful Proposals

- ▶ Address *all* criteria and provide all requested items and information
- ▶ Comply with proposal size/length limitations
- ▶ Observe CAP and category-specific funding restrictions
- ▶ Budget work and expenditures to meet both project objectives and funding limits
- ▶ Clearly state the source and value of In-kind Match
- ▶ Include Letters of Support for organizations indicated as project collaborators or prime benefactors

29

29

Proposal Selection Process

Hints for Successful Proposals (con't)

- ► Discuss how your organization will sustain the project outcomes after the CAP project ends
- ► Focus on partnerships with other organizations
- ► Discuss plans to share the project outcomes

and…

did we mention?

Read the CAP Announcement carefully

national spatial data infrastructure training program

30

30

Proposal Selection Process

Notification of Awards

- Successful applicants receive:
  - informal notification from the CAP Coordinator or Category Lead
  - formal notification from the USGS Office of Acquisitions and Grants
- Selected projects are posted to the FDGC Website and announced to the public via email
- Unsuccessful applicants receive notification from the CAP Coordinator that includes:
  - reason(s) the project was not selected
  - suggestions for other funding venues
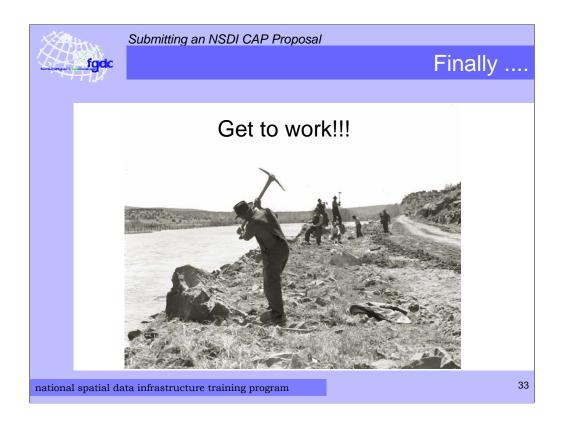 - USGS Liaisons or other organizations that could help move the project forward

31

Proposal Selection Process

Award Processing

Award processing requires two to four weeks to complete

- A Requisition (Form DI-1) is issued to authorize the expenditure of CAP funds to support the project
- The Office of Acquisitions and Grants (OAG) assigns a Federal Project Number
- An OAG Grants Officer is assigned to the project to review the budget and complete the award package
- An audit report is performed if the CAP recipient has expended over $500,000 in Federal awards in a fiscal year
- Award package is sent to the CAP recipient for signature and returned to the USGS
- It is signed by USGS Contracts Officer and the completed award package is and sent to the CAP recipient

Vintage photo of work crew with pick axes from
http://www.usda.gov/oc/photo/00di0877.htm

Conclusion

Successful submittal of an NSDI CAP proposal requires:

- ► Advanced planning and registration
- ► Careful review of the CAP Announcement
- ► Collaboration and partnership
- ► Demonstrated capabilities

For more information:

- ► visit www.fdgc.gov/grants
- ► contact CAP Coordinator: Gita Urban-Mathieux, burbanma@usgs.gov   703-648-5175

fgdc

NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program:
Implementing an NSDI CAP Project

Refer to http://www.fgdc.gov/training/training-materials